



CHAPTER 105
ARTICLE 12 - PROPERTY SUBJECT TO TAXATION

N.C.G.S. § 105-278.3.

Real and personal property used for religious purposes.

SOURCE	LAST AMENDMENT IN THIS TEXT	RETRIEVED	SOURCE FINGERPRINT
General Statutes of North Carolina, as published by the General Assembly	S.L. 2015-185, s. 1(a) — sixth act in the lineage	21 September 2026, 05:40 UTC	0b81d46f78002de2c00032c3 - 072eeef95e234952c27f60a6 - 39e965e6ca66ee23

- § 105-278.3(a)

Buildings, the land they actually occupy, and additional adjacent land reasonably necessary for the convenient use of any such building shall be exempted from taxation if wholly owned by an agency listed in subsection (c), below, and if:

(1)

Wholly and exclusively used by its owner for religious purposes as defined in subsection (d)(1), below; or

(2)

Occupied gratuitously by one other than the owner and wholly and exclusively used by the occupant for religious, charitable, or nonprofit educational, literary, scientific, or cultural purposes.
- § 105-278.3(b)

Personal property shall be exempted from taxation if wholly owned by an agency listed in subsection (c), below, and if:

(1)

Wholly and exclusively used by its owner for religious purposes; or

(2)

Gratuitously made available to one other than the owner and wholly and exclusively used by the possessor for religious, charitable, or nonprofit educational, literary, scientific, or cultural purposes.
- § 105-278.3(c)

The following agencies, when the other requirements of this section are met, may obtain exemption for their properties:

(1)

A congregation, parish, mission, or similar local unit of a church or religious body; or

- (2) A conference, association, presbytery, diocese, district, synod, or similar unit comprising local units of a church or religious body.

§ 105-278.3(d)

Within the meaning of this section:

- (1) A religious purpose is one that pertains to practicing, teaching, and setting forth a religion. Although worship is the most common religious purpose, the term encompasses other activities that demonstrate and further the beliefs and objectives of a given church or religious body. Within the meaning of this section, the ownership and maintenance of a general or promotional office or headquarters by an owner listed in subdivision (2) of subsection (c), above, is a religious purpose and the ownership and maintenance of residences for clergy, rabbis, priests or nuns assigned to or serving a congregation, parish, mission or similar local unit, or a conference, association, presbytery, diocese, district, synod, province or similar unit of a church or religious body or residences for clergy on furlough or unassigned, is also a religious purpose. However, the ownership and maintenance of residences for other employees is not a religious purpose for either a local unit of a church or a religious body or a conference, association, presbytery, diocese, district, synod, or similar unit of a church or religious body. Provided, however, that where part of property which otherwise qualifies for the exemption provided herein is made available as a residence for an individual who provides guardian, janitorial and custodial services for such property, or who oversees and supervises qualifying activities upon and in connection with said property, the entire property shall be considered as wholly and exclusively used for a religious purpose.
- (2) A charitable purpose is one that has humane and philanthropic objectives; it is an activity that benefits humanity or a significant rather than limited segment of the community without expectation of pecuniary profit or reward. The humane treatment of animals is also a charitable purpose.
- (3) An educational purpose is one that has as its objective the education or instruction of human beings; it comprehends the transmission of information and the training or development of the knowledge or skills of individual persons.
- (4) A literary purpose is one that pertains to letters or literature, especially writing, publishing, and the study of literature. It includes the literature of the stage and screen as well as the performance or exhibition of works based on literature.

- (5) A cultural purpose is one that is conducive to the enlightenment and refinement of taste acquired through intellectual and aesthetic training, education, and discipline.
- (6) A scientific purpose is one that yields knowledge systematically through research, experimentation or other work done in one or more of the natural sciences.

§ 105-278.3(e) Notwithstanding the exclusive-use requirement of subsection (a), above, if part of a property that otherwise meets that subsection's requirements is used for a purpose that would require exemption if the entire property were so used, the valuation of the part so used shall be exempted from taxation.

§ 105-278.3(f) The fact that a building or facility is incidentally available to and patronized by the general public, so long as there is no material amount of business or patronage with the general public, shall not defeat the exemption granted by this section.

§ 105-278.3(g) The following exceptions apply to the exclusive-use requirement of subsection (a) of this section:

- (1) If part, but not all, of a property meets the requirements of subsection (a) of this section, the valuation of the part so used is exempt from taxation.
- (2) Any parking lot wholly owned by an agency listed in subsection (c) of this section may be used for parking without removing the tax exemption granted in this section if the total charge for parking uses does not exceed that portion of the actual maintenance expenditures for the parking lot reasonably estimated to have been made on account of parking uses. This subsection shall apply beginning with the taxable year that commences on January 1, 1978.
- (3) A building and the land occupied by the building is exempt from taxation if it is under construction and intended to be wholly and exclusively used by its owner for religious purposes upon completion. For purposes of this subdivision, a building is under construction starting when a building permit is issued and ending at the earlier of (i) 90 days after a certificate of occupancy is issued or (ii) 180 days after the end of active construction.

Amendment lineage

1973	1994	2015	
TICK HEIGHT = ACTS IN THAT YEAR DASHED = RECODIFICATION, NOT AMENDMENT			
Nº	YEAR	ACT	CHARACTER
01	1973	c. 695, s. 4	ENACTED
02	1973	c. 1421	AMENDED
03	1975	c. 848	AMENDED
04	1977	c. 867	AMENDED
05	2005	S.L. 2005-435, s. 59(a)	AMENDED
06	2015	S.L. 2015-185, s. 1(a)	AMENDED

Citation

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 105-278.3 (2015).

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 105-278.3(a) (2015).

Pinpoint keys are set in the left margin of the text rather than line numbers: subsection designators are stable across editions and paper sizes, line numbers are not.

COLOPHON

Provenance

This document reproduces the text of one section of the General Statutes of North Carolina from a source file whose SHA-256 digest is printed on every page. The digest fixes the bytes this export was made from; if the State's file changes, the digest will not match.

The text of the section is unaltered. Subsection designators have been moved from the run of text into the margin. The amendment history and the table of authorities are derived from the section by mechanical extraction — they add no characterization of the law.

This is not the official text. The official text is published by the General Assembly of North Carolina.

HISTORY PARENTHETICAL, AS PRINTED BY THE STATE

(1973, c. 695, s. 4; c. 1421; 1975, c. 848; 1977, c. 867; 2005-435, s. 59(a); 2015-185, s. 1(a).)

SET IN SPECTRAL AND ARCHIVO
NORTH CAROLINA LAW — STATUTE EXPORT, FORMAT V1

